

October 24, 2000

Dear Family,

We took advantage of the warm weather and went to Ludington last weekend. Had a good time, but didn't do much other than eat and drive around. Watched fisherman snag poor old salmon in the river at Ludington State Park. They'd hook them in the side, drag them in, then release them. I suspect the salmon get real tired of that after a while.

Soon after Carol got her new job, she got invited to interview for another job. She has had the first interview and now she is waiting to see if she will get a second. The first job, which she is supposed to start Monday, is clerical/administrative at Haslett schools. The second job is as a counselor at Waverly Schools. Haslett is way across town and Waverly is close by. The Waverly job is in her field, pays \$2000 more, is only 6 hours a day, and she only works the school year. You can see her dilemma. She doesn't want to work a week at Haslett and then leave. She has thought of calling and making some excuse to delay her start date. My philosophy of job hunting is to be completely brutal. Look out for yourself only. They would not think twice about dumping you. All is fair in love and war and job hunting. Do whatever is necessary - lie, deceive, whatever. The employer will survive without you a lot better than you will survive without the job.

I got through the Covey training last week. Three days of wisdom from Mr. Covey. Actually, from one of his employees. We were taught to Be Proactive; Begin with the End in Mind; Put First Things First; Think Win-Win; Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood; to Synergize; and to Sharpen the Saw. Those are the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. The training alone cost \$1500 a person, then there was the lost time from work, the big meeting room at the Sheraton (3 miles from our office), nice buffet breakfast and lunch each day, a \$30 coupon for dinner (2 nights), a \$50 Franklin Planner, and gifts each day (a bag, a desk clock, and a shirt - all with the MERS emblem on them). We were encouraged to stay at the hotel the first 2 nights at company expense, which seemed peculiar. I didn't take them up on it, but I heard from those who did that milk and cookies were delivered to the rooms at bedtime. During the sessions, there was snack basket full of candy and gum, a first aid kit with Tylenol and bandaids in case we got a paper cut, cookies, fruit, or brownies at break time, all the coffee and pop you could drink, and balloons around the room that had on them Have a Great Day, You're Special, Best Wishes, and the smiley face. All paid for by MERS. All - in the end - at taxpayers' expense. Have a great day.

I tried to keep an open mind, but it was hard. Most of it is common sense. Every third word that came out of the leader's mouth was "paradigm", and I am still not clear what it means. Also, the concept of Win-Win is hard for me to buy. It sounds like compromise, although they claimed it was not the same thing. I prefer Win-Lose. Sometimes, people are dead wrong and deserve to lose. If you don't piss someone off from time to time, you are not taking your work seriously.

Steve